

TIMES AND TRAILS

People, Projects and Priorities at Environment and Conservation

Volume 3, No. 5

May 2006

In Vision

Environment and Conservation employees:

May is always a busy time of the year for our department. The General Assembly is currently wrapping up this session, and we have been successful working with members to secure a number of improvements for the public. On May 4 Governor Bredesen added six new State Natural Areas for Tennessee as he signed the administration's State Natural Areas bill into law. The department is now responsible for managing 75 State Natural Areas (SNAs) representing a total acreage of 108,387. New State Natural Areas for 2006 include: Pogue Creek SNA in Fentress County, Stillhouse Hollow Falls SNA in Maury County, Rugby SNA in Morgan County, the Walls of Jericho SNA in Franklin County plus Campbell Bend and Crowder Cemetery SNAs in Roane County.

The Governor also signed into law the authority for our department to issue a "stop work" order when mining operations create significant pollution impacts on rivers and streams in our state. This enhanced enforcement authority complements the good work our staff is already doing to improve the quality of water in Tennessee. Improving the condition of Tennessee's waters is one of our department's highest priorities. Tennessee is blessed with abundant and available waters – more than 60,000 miles of rivers and streams. Tennessee is a growing state, and this growth puts pressure on our waters: increased population, expansive land use, urbanization and development. We've just posted our 2006 assessment of the status of waters in Tennessee and our list of waters that are impaired. We're also finishing responses to comments on our revisions to the rules that establish Tennessee's clean water goals. These are important parts of our state's continuing efforts to improve waters through our watershed-based approach to management. We live, work, travel in the same watersheds we play, swim and fish in, so we all need to understand how our everyday activities relate to the health of our waters. Working together, we will keep our waters healthy for future generations.

Earlier this week I was a guest on Morning Line, a call-in cable television show here in Nashville. It was a good opportunity to share information about Tennessee State Parks and our upcoming summer activities. More than one caller during the program mentioned how much they enjoyed visiting state parks and thought our park locations were cleaner than ever. It is always nice to hear supportive comments about state parks, but I know that is no accident. Visitors have a good experience and take away positive impressions about the cleanliness and quality of our operations because department staff ensure guests find a clean, safe place to enjoy our good nature and a wide range of recreational opportunities. I also believe our parks are cleaner because citizens appreciate their parks and realize these places really do belong to all of us. I hope we can keep expanding this shared stewardship recognition for public spaces. This week the First Lady kicked off the Keep Tennessee Beautiful campaign with a focus on reducing highway litter. I hope you will join me in supporting this effort to curb roadside trash and get people thinking about how our individual actions contribute to the natural beauty we enjoy here in Tennessee.

As we approach Memorial Day I want to recognize Jim Payne, Information Systems, and Robert Nakamoto, Division of Solid Waste. Jim is currently on military leave in the Middle East, and Robert recently returned from his duties in the Gulf region. On this holiday we thank them for their service and honor each person in our department who has served and sacrificed for our nation.



Commissioner Jim Fyke

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim".

Tennessee Works to Reduce Diesel Emissions Through the Southeast Diesel Collaborative

The State of Tennessee recently joined leaders from industry, the environmental community and government to establish the Southeast Diesel Collaborative by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Atlanta on April 26. The collaborative is a regional partnership sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency's regional office, that brings together key stakeholders to improve air quality by encouraging the use of clean renewable energy and reducing diesel emissions from existing engines in the agricultural, heavy construction and transportation sectors. Tennessee was represented at this signing by Environment and Conservation Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens and Agriculture Assistant Commissioner Joe Gaines.

"Tennessee is pleased to be part of this regional effort to promote the reduction of diesel emissions through voluntary initiatives," said Deputy Commissioner Sloan. "Our state's central location and positive business climate have made us home for many of the nation's leading transportation companies. I hope we can translate some of that same leadership and success into thinking about innovative approaches to reduce pollution from heavy-duty diesel engines."

Participants in the collaborative will explore various strategies to reduce emissions from diesel engines in the southeastern United States, including the expanded use of clean renewable fuels and installing retrofit emission control technologies for older machines. The group will also support programs that promote the growth of crops such as canola and soy to increase the production of sustainable renewable energy sources and identify areas where further study and research are needed.

"I think bioenergy is good for the farm economy, but it is also very good for the conservation of fuels, national security and everything else. As far as I'm concerned, it is a win-win."

~ Gov. Phil Bredesen,
Columbia Daily Herald 02/17/06

"Emissions from mobile sources like heavy-duty diesel engines are having an increasingly greater impact on air quality as more trucks hit the road and more miles are traveled in Tennessee and across the entire southeast," said Senior Director for Air Resources Tracy Carter. "While new ultra low sulfur diesel fuel being introduced into our national supply this summer is a positive step, Tennessee and the region will still need to do more work regarding mobile source emissions in order to meet stricter federal health requirements for air quality."

This regional Southeast Diesel Collaborative complements the activities of the state's Diesel Working Group and Governor Bredesen's Interagency Alternative Fuels Working Group. Supported by the department's Division of Air Pollution Control, the Diesel Working Group includes diverse stakeholder representatives and has been working for over a year on state level diesel issues. Members of the Governor's Alternative Fuels Group have been meeting for the past three months to identify effective ways the state can encourage the production, distribution and use of

biofuels, particularly biodiesel and ethanol, to enable Tennessee to transform some of the state's energy and environmental challenges into economic opportunity and increased energy security.



Representatives of the many partner organizations who participated in the Southeast Diesel Collaborative Partnership signing ceremony.



Sloan Asks Leaders to Seek Greater Environmental Literacy at State's First-ever Environmental Education Summit

More than 60 educators, instructors and interpretative coordinators participated the first-ever statewide Environmental Education summit at Middle Tennessee State University on April 27 and 28. Supported by an Environmental Protection Agency grant and the Tennessee Environmental Education Association (TEEA), a diverse group of stakeholders came together to identify challenges, share successes and set priorities for environmental education in Tennessee.

The summit keynote address was delivered by Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan who challenged the attendees to think about establishing a fundamental set of environmental understanding every Tennessean should have, "Allow me to suggest a specific possibility for those of us in this room. Let us consider entering a COMPACT – a compact in which we set forth the predicates for conservation and environmental literacy in Tennessee. I am not here speaking of aligning courses to core curriculums in our schools. Though that is important work, I am suggesting a broader possibility – one that would be open to all people."

"Environmental stewardship in a democracy requires the consent of the governed and can never be attained by mere rules and regulations. We must share a fundamental environmental ethic so strong that we will make sacrifices on its behalf. Such an ethic can only exist if each of us has attained a minimum threshold of conservation and environmental literacy."

"Aldo Leopold stated a simple ethical standard: 'A thing is right when it tends to preserve the dignity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.' Together let us answer the question: 'What fundamental competencies would Aldo Leopold have us possess in order to judge whether a personal decision, a public policy, or a piece of legislation is right or wrong?' We need to give our citizens the resources to make these decisions – to understand the ecological context in which we live and the long-term implication of human activities."

Paul continued by outlining three steps for the audience, "Let us consider taking these three steps: First, as a diverse group of over 50 programs, we create this compact in which we set forth the prerequisite components of conservation and environmental literacy. Second, we identify elements of our own programs that provide components of the compact. And third, we work together to develop the best means by which all citizens are given the



Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan



Left to right: Vaughn Cassidy, Jackson Environmental Field Office, Mark Penland, Knoxville Environmental Field Office, Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, Laura Franklin, State Parks Central Office, Mike Cole, Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park and Levan Gardner, Booker T. Washington State Park.

opportunity to access these resources."

Environment and Conservation will continue to play a leading role in promoting environmental literacy among children and adults. Whether it's a Sullivan County field trip to explore critters in the creek or offering an Earth Day experience for hundreds of Chattanooga fourth graders at Booker T. Washington State Park, our department and staff are uniquely qualified to help all people understand and appreciate the natural world.

All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory Continues in Tennessee State Parks

The Tennessee State Parks All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) is an on-going statewide comprehensive biological inventory and monitoring program. Modeled after the successful Great Smoky Mountains National Park ATBI, the state parks' version now has more than 25 parks participating in the program. The purpose of the program is to inventory and monitor biological features such as fungi, plants, animals, even soil organisms utilizing existing park staff, local colleges, universities and secondary schools, and community volunteers. Volunteers can be experts in the various biological disciplines or just have a general interest in biological topics. This program will not only provide much needed data to help better protect the creatures residing in our parks, it will also help us identify the numerous plants and animals that are not currently known to be in the parks. It might also discover plants, animals or other organisms that are new to the scientific community.

ATBI is being conducted throughout the U.S. by many parks, both national and state, but so far, Tennessee State Parks is the only organization conducting the program state-wide. Since its inception, LinnAnn Welch (linnann.welch@state.tn.us) has been the lead coordinator of the program. Dr. David Hill (david.r.hill@state.tn.us), recently retired from Belmont University in Nashville, has been hired to assist LinnAnn with the ATBI. Requests for additional information about the program can be sent to either LinnAnn or David.

This spring, many parts of the ATBI came together to make the program more accessible to park staff and volunteers. Perhaps the most important improvement was the development and completion of our ATBI database. David Brewer, Information Systems Division, using the Great Smoky Mountains National Park database as a guide, developed the State Parks database using Oracle Application Express. This database is currently available only on the State of Tennessee's intranet. The goal is to make the database accessible via the internet so that researchers can enter their data from their home or office computer and, more importantly, enable the public to see which organisms can be found in the state parks of Tennessee. For example, individuals may want to know what birds they might expect to see on a visit to a particular state park or perhaps to see what wildflowers are found in a particular park. They would then be able to look up this information on the ATBI website.



A young Prince Baskettail Dragonfly on the right, is just one of the many animals catalogued by volunteers. Photo courtesy of Richard Connor.

State Parks Unveils New Mascot

Ramble the Ranger has arrived. Ramble made his public debut at the Memphis Redbirds game at AutoZone Park in Memphis on May 19. Ranger Ronnie Douglas with T.O. Fuller State Park is scheduling additional Ramble appearances across the state this summer. When not on the road, Ramble will reside in Memphis.



KaMeisha Moorlet, T.O. Fuller State Park, poses with Ramble for photographs in front of the T.O. Fuller visitor's center in Memphis.

Teaching a child not to step on a caterpillar is as valuable to the child as it is to the caterpillar.

~Bradley Millar

Burgess Falls State Natural Area Goes Native

Burgess Falls State Natural Area has created an oasis for butterflies, hummingbirds and other animals with the completion of the Butterfly Garden Project. The 20,000 square foot butterfly garden was initiated to increase the amount of natural habitat in the park. Additional benefits of the restoration include a 20 percent decrease in mowing of non-native fescue grass areas and an increase of easily accessed areas for interpretive programming.

The garden is comprised of many large sections that border the upper parking lots. Many volunteer hours were dedicated to planning the layout, preparing the site, planting native flowers, shrubs and trees, moving over 400 cubic yards of mulch, and placing rocks. The main volunteers include the Putnam County Master Gardeners, AmeriCorps members and students from Tennessee Technological University. Each of these groups invested their time and talents into creating this unique and beautiful, natural space.

The Butterfly Garden Project was primarily funded by the Tennessee Iris Fund Program. Funds from the purchase of this Tennessee State Parks specialty license plate are used by state parks to purchase plants and take care of trees, shrubs, plants and flowers in Tennessee's state parks. For more information about the Iris Fund Program visit www.tnstateparks.com/specplate.php.



False Blue Indigo (Baptisia australis) was used by Native Americans to make a blue dye.



Wood for the bridge and some of the interpretive signage were paid for by a grant from the Tennessee Trails and Greenways Foundation.

Right: Master Gardener, Dr. Gary Moore, and State Parks Middle TN Regional Manager, Steve Pardue, install foundations for the footbridge designed by Dr. Moore.



Park staff and volunteers work together to hardscape, plant and maintain approximately 3,000 native plants representing over 70 native species. A bridge, two benches and a water feature were included in the garden design.



One of the new garden benches is flanked by mounds of native columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), a favorite of the Ruby Throated Hummingbird, butterflies and bees.

Fugitive Air Emission Monitoring

The department's Division of Energy Oversight oversees various activities on the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) and conducts numerous sampling projects at each of the three main ORR facilities. The division takes weekly samples of the air, drinking water, and other environmental media, as well as monitoring for ambient radiation levels at selected sites and then sends them to the state radiochemistry laboratory in Nashville to be analyzed for gross alpha, gross beta, and gamma spectrometry.

The division also monitors locations where there is a potential for the release of fugitive emissions. Fugitive emissions are air pollutants released into the air that do not come from a point source such as a smoke stack or vent. The pollution is usually from leaky equipment or a consequence of remedial and/or waste management activities, such as those found at various locations on the Oak Ridge Reservation.

This program now utilizes three mobile high volume air samplers that can be moved to different areas of interest. Two of the samplers are currently located in different areas of the East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP), and a third is located at the Environmental Management Waste Management Facility (EMWMF). The EMWMF is a massive waste cell designed to accept radioactive wastes from CERCLA clean-up operations on the Oak Ridge Reservation. The results from the mobile units are compared to data collected from a background station located at Fort Loudoun Dam.



Natalie Pheasant with the Department of Energy Oversight Division in Oak Ridge changes out the filter of the high volume air sampler located at the Environmental Management Waste Management Facility.

Annual Solid/Hazardous Waste Conference Marks 35th Year

Environment and Conservation was pleased to support the 35th Annual Solid/Hazardous Waste Conference & Exhibition held May 3-5 in Gatlinburg. The event was a resounding success as nearly 900 attendees and 120 exhibitors took advantage of this opportunity to network and learn at one of the region's premier environmental conferences. Sponsored by the department's Division of Solid/Hazardous Waste, it is believed to be the longest running state sponsored environmental conference in the country.

The conference featured eight different workshop tracks of timely, contemporary topics geared for agency staff, local officials, consultants, lawyers and engineers. Commissioner Jim Fyke opened the event with a warm welcome for the attendees and special recognition for Mike Apple, Solid/Hazardous Waste Division Director. Mike received a plaque honoring his 35 plus years of service to the State of Tennessee and its citizens. Despite his boyish looks and charm, Mike has been at each of the 35 conferences and has been an instrumental part of their growth.

Commissioner Fyke also recognized the winners of the 2006 Governor's Award for Excellence in Solid/Hazardous Waste Management. Hamilton County's School Chemical Cleanout Campaign received the small generator award while Fort Campbell's Pollution Prevention Operation Center received the large generator award. Hamilton County was honored for taking decisive action to protect student's health and the environment when they realized the threat presented by a legacy of old laboratory chemicals in their schools. With support from two Environmental Protection Agency grants and TDEC's School Chemical Cleanout Campaign program, a total of 3,662 pounds of chemicals, including 90 pounds of mercury, have now been removed from Hamilton County schools.

Fort Campbell's Pollution Prevention Center was honored for their record of environmental responsibility, mission readiness and expense control. The Center manages hazardous materials for 135 units supporting 20,000 Fort Campbell soldiers during day-to-day operations and deployment situations. The practices, educational outreach techniques and procedures of the Center ensure materials are managed responsibly to reduce waste and ensure quality products to soldiers. The installation can now provide hazardous materials, at a moment's notice, in a manner that is safe for both their soldiers and their environment. By combining education, source reduction techniques, and recycling Fort Campbell has reduced the amount of hazardous waste disposed at the base by 84.6 percent during the past decade; a 90.1 percent disposal cost reduction since 1992.

Plans are already underway for the 36th Annual Conference as the department continues the tradition of providing one of the most comprehensive environmental education programs in the nation.

Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park Hosts Annual Tennessee Critters Event

Wild critters from across our state were spotted in downtown Nashville on April 7 and 8 at the 2nd Annual Tennessee Critters Event. Critters present for the event included bald eagles, hawks, owls, vultures, turtles, an assortment of snakes including a copperhead, a timber rattlesnake and many more. Visitors experienced everything from fossils of past critters to demonstrations with living critters. All exhibits were based on wildlife native to our state.

To kick festivities off on Friday, John and Dale Stokes of Save Our American Raptors (SOAR) wowed the hundreds of school kids seated in the amphitheater with their live raptor performance. The Nashville Zoo followed up with an entertaining stage performance that involved students from the audience as well as



John and David Stokes (in purple shirts), SOAR, captivate the crowd with their raptor presentation.



Robin Harkins from the Nashville Zoo describes features of bird biology using a student from the audience as an example.



Ranger David Haggard discusses eagles with the crowd.

several live animals.

Park Rangers David Haggard and Tim Wheatley captivated audiences as they walked by with an assorted display of live birds. The Tennessee Aquarium allowed visitors to see some aquatic critters up close and personal. Views of insect critters were provided by the Davidson County Extension Agency. Excited school kids also loved the hands-on approach to fossils provided by the Division of Geology staff.

There were many new exhibitors to this year's lineup including: The Nashville Zoo, The Tennessee Aquarium, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Ducks Unlimited. Other educational exhibits included Walden's Puddle, the Tennessee Ornithological Society and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency with their walk-through wildlife education center.

Walden's Puddle taught visitors about the critter rehabilitation process. Park Rangers from Long Hunter State Park, Nathan Bedford Forrest State Park and Radnor Lake State Park educated audiences about many more of our state's interesting critters.

Despite the devastating tornadoes that came through on Friday afternoon and the chilling weather on Saturday, the event was a huge success. More than 2,000 visitors attended the two-day event. Preparations are already being made for next year's event. Plans include an order for calm and sunny weather, so mark your calendars!



Ranger Josh Kirby, Radnor Lake State Park, displays a Northern Pine snake to some of the event's young attendees.

Annual Kids in the Creek Event a Success

The Johnson City Environmental Field Office participated in the 3rd annual "Kids in the Creek" event held at Little Chucky Creek in Greeneville. Approximately 45 eighth graders from McDonald School attended and rotated through four different learning stations. Tina Robinson and Beverly Brown, WPC Division, showed the students benthic sampling and identification. Jan Compton with the Office of Environmental Assistance helped the students determine temperature, pH and dissolved oxygen in the stream. She also discussed the effect these parameters have on fish and other aquatic life. TVA worked the other two stations where students learned about water pollution with enviroscape and how to shock, count and identify fish. Sponsors for the event included TVA, Keep Greene Beautiful, First Tennessee Development District, Environment and Conservation and AM&M Consulting.



Tina Robinson (standing) and Bev Brown assist students with benthic identification.



Students assist TVA employees Chris Cooper and John Justice in counting and identifying fish.

Tennessee Women's Open Golf Championship Coming to Bear Trace at Cumberland Mountain on July 25-26

The Tennessee Golf Association will host the eighth annual Frontier Tennessee Women's Open Championship on July 25-26 at the Bear Trace at Cumberland Mountain. The Frontier Women's Open Championship is open to professional and amateur golfers who are residents of the states bordering and including Tennessee. The Women's Open Championship will be a two-day, 36-hole, stroke play tournament with cash prizes for professionals and medals for the top ten amateur finishers.

Play begins on Monday, July 24 with tournament participant's practice rounds and the annual Pro-Am. Proceeds from the Pro-Am will benefit the Cumberland County Rescue Squad. Last year's Pro-Am raised over \$1,000. The Rescue Squad actively benefits the citizens of Cumberland County as a disaster support group. A volunteer-based group, the Rescue Squad provides other services such as lost person, water, and cave search and rescues.

"We are pleased the Tennessee Golf Association and Frontier Communications have chosen the Bear Trace at Cumberland Mountain to host this year's Tennessee Women's Open tournament," said State Parks' Golf Director Jim Webb. "I am confident Head Pro Kelvin Burgin and the Cumberland Mountain team will create a challenging course and a memorable event for all the participants."



Left to Right: Commissioner Jim Fyke, Cumberland Mountain Head Golf Professional Kelvin Burgin, Cumberland Mountain Golf Course Staff Scott Overly and Assistant Commissioner Andy Lyon look forward to the Bear Trace at Cumberland Mountain hosting the 2006 State Women's Open on July 24-26.

May Service Anniversaries

5 Years

Dianna Bass, Frozen Head State Park
Robert Hannabas, GWP, Johnson City EFO
Torian Harris, T. O. Fuller State Park
Margaret Hopkins, Fall Creek Falls State Park
Vinson Kilgore, Jr., Booker T. Washington State Park
Melissa Porter, DFS, Central Office

10 years

Ward Andrews, Montgomery Bell State Park
Kenneth Childress, Norris Dam State Park
Joan Cummings, Fall Creek Falls State Park
John Sloan, Pickwick Landing State Park
John Smith, David Crockett State Park

15 Years

John Bowen, Mousetail Landing State Park
Leonardo Chavez, Fall Creek Falls State Park
John Renfore, Jr., Natchez Trace State Park
Ruse Tucker, Jr., Recreation Education Services

20 Years

Judith Bateman, DOR, Central Office
Sherry Cossette, UST, Central Office
Jim Hicks, Facilities Management, West TN
Debra Long, DFS, Central Office
Vicki Medley, Long Hunter State Park
Terry Templeton, WPC, Memphis EFO

25 Years

Farokh Kamel, WPC, Knoxville EFO
Virginia Johnson, Cumberland Mountain State Park

30 Years

Lamar Bradley, UST, Central Office
Tommy Evans, Natchez Trace State Park
Kathy Irick, SWM Knoxville EFO

Happy Memorial Day! Monday, May 29

Left to right: Richard Chapman, F&A, Insurance Administration; Dianne White, Nashville Environmental Field Office; Faye Chiles, EAP representative; Selena Cunningham, director of H.R.; Steve Janes, Nashville Environmental Field Office; Sharon Escue, Nashville Environmental Field Office.

Donovan Acknowledged for DOD/EPA Partnership Achievements

Roger Donovan, Solid Waste Management, was recognized with a Certificate of Excellence at a recent Department of Defense/EPA joint meeting in Atlanta for his outstanding work guiding Fort Campbell, Milan Army Ammunition Plant and Holston Army Ammunition Plant as a State Remediation Project Manager. Roger's leadership through the remediation process allowed these installations to expedite cleanup at some of the nation's most critical military installations while still meeting the state's cleanup goals and objectives.



Left to right: Roger Donovan, Solid and Hazardous Waste Management, is congratulated by EPA Deputy Regional Administrator Stan Meiburg and U.S. Army Colonel Tony Francis in Atlanta.

Department Wins Employee Assistance Program's Most Outstanding Participation Award

Faye Chiles recently accepted the Employee Assistance Program's Most Outstanding Participation Award on behalf of the department. During March, Faye coordinated several outreach programs for employees in the central office, environmental field offices and parks. Congratulations Faye!



Pelicans Recuperate at Reelfoot Lake State Park

Tennessee residents are not the only ones coping with the severe April weather. Recent storms that hit the Dyersburg area in western Tennessee not only affected local residents but also several unusual migratory birds.

A flock of American White Pelicans, who spend the winter on the Gulf Coast and migrate through the area on their return to Canada, were caught in a hail storm near Lenox. Lenox residents found the dazed birds walking around the neighborhood and called Reelfoot Lake State Park for assistance.

Rangers David Haggard and Shane Morrow responded and caught four of the huge birds that were wandering around the residents' homes. The birds seemed stunned, and one had a broken wing. David and Shane transported the birds to Reelfoot Lake State Park, where they were treated, recuperated and released.

American White Pelicans are one of the largest birds in North America. The largest pelican found at Reelfoot Lake State Park weighed more than 16 pounds and had a wingspan more than nine feet. They are so heavy they have a difficult time taking flight from the ground, and usually run across the water to take flight.



Reelfoot Lake State Park employees David Haggard, Jerry Hall, Summer Stuart and Shane Morrow pose with the four migrating pelicans. Photos courtesy of Mike Stanley.



Above: Mike Stanley watches as the pelicans resume their journey to Canada. Photo by David Haggard.

Left: Park employees prepare to release the pelicans into the water.

Times and Trails is published monthly by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

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